

TOPIC: PROCEDURES FOR EXITING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS AS FULLY ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENT

This bulletin summarizes the two ways that districts report English Language Learner students as fully English proficient. *Fully English proficient* (ELP 6) is the classification of English Language Learners (ELL) who attain English language proficiency and exit from limited English proficiency (LEP) status. There are two ways for a student to be reclassified as fully English language proficient, or no longer ELL/LEP:

- A. Automatically exiting in the statewide Individual Student Enrollment System (ISES) when the student reaches ELP 6 by achieving a 6.0 overall composite score on Wisconsin's English language proficiency examination, *ACCESS for ELLs*[®]; or
- B. Manually reclassified by the district if the student is at least in the 4th grade; is at least an ELP 5; if sufficient evidence has been collected demonstrating the student has developed academic English language proficiency; and the district has the required documentation on file. These criteria are described further below.

DESCRIPTION OF A FULLY ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENT STUDENT

In general, English language learners (ELL) are no longer classified as limited-English proficient (LEP) once they have attained the language skills necessary to compete with mainstream English speakers in age and grade appropriate settings in all areas of language development without the use of adapted or modified English materials.

The fully English proficient student, ready to exit language instruction educational programs, demonstrates English language proficiency in relation to the full range of classroom demands and the academic language needed for successful educational performance including demonstrating proficiency in:

1. Understanding and speaking English,
2. Reading and comprehending academic English,
3. Writing in English, and
4. Demonstrating English proficiency in other academic subject areas.

A. AUTOMATIC EXITING

Students that score a 6.0 composite (overall) score on the *ACCESS for ELLs* test automatically attain an ELP 6 language level in ISES (Individual Student Enrollment System) in subsequent collections and will no longer be classified as an English Language Learner.¹ Districts are to verify the accuracy of this data in ISES. ISES data collections are available from August-October for districts to verify students' ELP codes.

¹ For descriptions of Wisconsin's five levels of limited-English proficiency and two levels of full English proficiency, see: www.dpi.wi.gov/ell/pdf/elp-levels.pdf.

B. MANUAL RECLASSIFICATION

Districts may reclassify those students who have demonstrated academic English language proficiency, provided that the students are at least in the fourth grade and are at least ELP 5, and provided that sufficient evidence is collected to support the reclassification decision.

A uniform reclassification procedure must be used with all ELL students in a district. In addition, reclassification must include monitoring provisions and a procedure for the student to re-enter the ELL program if evidence indicates that language proficiency is in question. These procedures are to be provided to all educators and parents with an interest in ELL programming, and made available during any ESEA monitoring visits.

In order to manually reclassify a student, the district must evaluate the academic English language proficiency of ELL students in accordance with the following:

1. The student is at least in the fourth grade.
2. The student has attained at least an ELP Level 5.
Note that ELP Level 5-Advanced is where the student:
 - (a) understands and speaks conversational and academic English well,
 - (b) is near proficient in reading, writing, and content area skills needed to meet grade level expectations, and
 - (c) requires only occasional LEP support.
3. The student has sufficiently developed the academic language to demonstrate their understanding in English.²
4. The district has evaluated at least two pieces of evidence of academic English language proficiency and keeps evidence on file in the district for at least two years. Evidence should include demonstrations of proficiency without the use of adapted or modified English materials or ELL accommodations on standardized measures such as:
 - District benchmark examinations (in multiple content areas)
 - Writing samples or performance assessments scored with formal, standardized rubrics
 - State assessments at applicable grade levels, and
 - Academic records such as semester or end-of-course grades.

Note: Students with disabilities under Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) should meet the above standards, or have Individual Education Plans (IEPs) that specify parallel, alternate standards-related criteria.

5. The parent(s) and educators agree that the student has reached full English proficiency.

In sum, evidence from academic assessments should support educators' judgment of English proficiency. Evaluation for a reclassification decision should include the bilingual and/or ESL teacher, classroom teachers, parents and other relevant staff. If observations and academic performance indicate that there is no language barrier, then the student should be reclassified as fully English language proficient (ELP 6).

REQUIRED NOTIFICATION

Parental notification describing the student's English language proficiency and supporting evidence should be retained on file with the evidence. It is expected that parents are consulted prior to their formal notification. There should be consensus among the educators and parents about reclassification and district policy should address procedures to follow when a parent wishes to keep their student in English language instruction programs (opposes exited status).

²The literacy requirements and complexity of the fourth grade curriculum provide the earliest opportunities for many students to accurately demonstrate their level of academic English language proficiency.

REQUIRED MONITORING

The district is required to monitor all fully English language proficient students for the first two school years the students are fully English proficient, after their exit from ELL/LEP classification. Districts must keep documentation (grade level, final ELP composite score, at least two pieces of evidence, parental notification, and additional annual evidence of English language proficiency) on file throughout the two-year monitoring period. See *Required Two-Year Monitoring for Former ELLs*.³

REQUIRED ISES DATA

District data coordination between ISES administrators and ELL program staff is essential to accurately meet public reporting and accountability requirements.⁴ Students who are fully English language proficient (Former ELL) must be identified as ELP 6 in ISES data collections.

A. Automatic Exiting

For students who attain a 6.0 composite score (overall) on *ACCESS for ELLs*, ISES will automatically calculate an ELP 6 code.

B. Manual Reclassification

For students who have been reclassified, the district must upload the ELP 6 code to the student's record. The required evidence supporting reclassification described in this bulletin should be retained for two school years after reclassification while the Former ELL/LEP (FLEP) student is in monitoring status.

Note that the ISES data collections are open from August-October for districts to update ELP codes.

IMPACT ON POLICY AND FUNDING

Former ELLs, those students who are now fully English language proficient, will no longer:

- Take *ACCESS for ELLs*®
- Receive ELL testing accommodations on standardized tests and state assessments
- Be eligible for English language instruction programs (e.g., bilingual or ESL programs)
- Generate Title III funds

RESOURCES

For further information visit:

ELP Code Data Element: <http://www.dpi.wi.gov/lbstat/dataelp.html>

Calculated Fields and Codes in ISES: <http://www.dpi.wi.gov/lbstat/isescalc.html>

General ISES Information: <http://www.dpi.wi.gov/lbstat/isesapp.html>

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³ Bulletin 8.01, *Required Two-Year Monitoring for Former ELLs*, http://dpi.wi.gov/esea/pdf/bul_0801.pdf

⁴ Accountability for English Language Learners (ELLs), <http://www.dpi.wi.gov/oea/ellamao.html>